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AN ESSAY
ON THE
ANGLO-SAXON.
BY
THOMAS JEFFERSON.



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A Book
from
B. W. Green,
University Station,
Charlottesville,
- Virginia



AN ESSAY
TOWARDS FACILITATING INSTRUCTION
IN THE
ANGLO-SAXON
AND
MODERN DIALECTS OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE.

FOR THE USE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA.

BY
THOMAS JEFFERSON.

PRINTED BY ORDER OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES FOR THE UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA.

NEW-YORK:
JOHN F. TROW, PRINTER, 49 ANN-STREET.
1851.



TO HERBERT CROFT, ESQ., L.L.B., LONDON.



MONTICELLO, October 30th, 1798.

SIR,

The copy of your printed letter on the English and German languages, which you have been so kind as to send me, has come to hand ; and I pray you to accept of my thanks for this mark of your attention. I have perused it with singular pleasure, and, having long been sensible of the importance of a knowledge of the Northern languages to the understanding of English, I see it, in this letter, proved and specifically exemplified by your collations of the English and German. I shall look with impatience for the publication of your "English and German Dictionary." Johnson, besides the want of precision in his definitions, and of accurate distinction in passing from one shade of meaning to another of the same word, is most objectionable in his derivations. From a want probably of intimacy with our own language while in the Anglo-Saxon form and type, and of its kindred languages of the North, he has a constant leaning towards Greek and Latin for English etymon. Even Skinner has a

little of this, who, when he has given the true Northern parentage of a word, often tells you from what Greek and Latin source it might be derived by those who have that kind of partiality. He is, however, on the whole, our best etymologist, unless we ascend a step higher to the Anglo-Saxon vocabulary; and he has set the good example of collating the English word with its kindred word in the several Northern dialects, which often assist in ascertaining its true meaning.

Your idea is an excellent one, in producing authorities for the meanings of words, "to select the prominent passages in our best writers, to make your dictionary a general index to English literature, and thus intersperse with verdure and flowers the barren deserts of Philology." And I believe with you that "wisdom, morality, religion, thus thrown down, as if without intention, before the reader, in quotations, may often produce more effect than the very passages in the books themselves;"—"that the cowardly suicide, in search of a strong word for his dying letter, might light on a passage which would excite him to blush at his want of fortitude, and to forego his purpose;"—"and that a dictionary with examples at the words may, in regard to every branch of knowledge, produce more real effect than the whole collection of books which it quotes." I have sometimes myself used Johnson as a Repertory, to find favorite passages which I wished to recollect, but too rarely with success.

I was led to set a due value on the study of the Northern languages, and especially of our Anglo-Saxon, while I was a student of the law, by being obliged to recur to that source for explanation of a multitude of law-terms. A preface to Fortescue on Monarchies, written by Fortescue Aland, and afterwards premised to his volume of Reports, develops the advantages to be derived to the English student generally, and particularly the student of law, from an acquaintance with the Anglo-Saxon; and mentions the books to which the learner may have recourse for acquiring the language. I accordingly devoted some time to its study, but my busy life has not permitted me to indulge in a pursuit to which I felt great attraction. While engaged in it, however, some ideas occurred for facilitating the study by simplifying its grammar, by reducing the infinite diversities of its unfixed orthography to single and settled forms, indicating at

the same time the pronunciation of the word by its correspondence with the characters and powers of the English alphabet. Some of these ideas I noted at the time on the blank leaves of my Elstob's Anglo-Saxon Grammar: but there I have left them, and must leave them, unpursued, although I still think them sound and useful. Among the works which I proposed for the Anglo-Saxon student, you will find such literal and verbal translations of the Anglo-Saxon writers recommended, as you have given us of the German in your printed letter. Thinking that I cannot submit those ideas to a better judge than yourself, and that if you find them of any value you may put them to some use, either as hints in your dictionary, or in some other way, I will copy them as a sequel to this letter, and commit them without reserve to your better knowledge of the subject. Adding my sincere wishes for the speedy publication of your valuable dictionary, I tender you the assurance of my high respect and consideration.

THOMAS JEFFERSON.

THE importance of the Anglo-Saxon dialect towards a perfect understanding of the English language seems not to have been duly estimated by those charged with the education of youth; and yet it is unquestionably the basis of our present tongue. It was a full-formed language; its frame and construction, its declension of nouns and verbs, and its syntax were peculiar to the Northern languages, and fundamentally different from those of the South. It was the language of all England, properly so called, from the Saxon possession of that country in the sixth century to the time of Henry III. in the thirteenth, and was spoken pure and unmixed with any other. Although the Romans had been in possession of that country for nearly five centuries from the time of Julius Cæsar, yet it was a military possession chiefly, by their soldiery alone, and with dispositions intermutually jealous and unamicable. They seemed to have aimed at no lasting settlements there, and to have had little familiar mixture with the native Britons. In this state of connection there would probably be little incorporation of the Roman into the native language, and on their subsequent evacuation of the island its traces would soon be lost altogether. And had it been otherwise, these innovations would have been carried with the natives themselves when driven into Wales by the invasion and entire occupation of the rest of the Southern portion of the island by the Anglo-Saxons. The language of these last became that of the country from that time forth, for nearly seven centuries; and so little attention was paid among them to the Latin, that it was known to a few individuals only as a matter of science, and without any chance

of transfusion into the vulgar language. We may safely repeat the affirmation, therefore, that the pure Anglo-Saxon constitutes at this day the basis of our language. That it was sufficiently copious for the purposes of society in the existing condition of arts and manners, reason alone would satisfy us from the necessity of the case. Its copiousness, too, was much favored by the latitude it allowed of combining primitive words so as to produce any modification of idea desired. In this characteristic it was equal to the Greek, but it is more specially proved by the actual fact of the books they have left us in the various branches of history, geography, religion, law, and poetry. And although since the Norman conquest it has received vast additions and embellishments from the Latin, Greek, French, and Italian languages, yet these are but engraftments on its idiomatic stem; its original structure and syntax remain the same, and can be but imperfectly understood by the mere Latin scholar. Hence the necessity of making the Anglo-Saxon a regular branch of academic education. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries it was assiduously cultivated by a host of learned men. The names of Lambard, Parker, Spelman, Wheeloc, Wilkins, Gibson, Hickes, Thwaites, Somner, Benson, Mareschal, Elstob, deserve to be ever remembered with gratitude for the Anglo-Saxon works which they have given us through the press, the only certain means of preserving and promulgating them. For a century past this study has been too much neglected. The reason of this neglect, and its remedy, shall be the subject of some explanatory observations. These will respect—I. The Alphabet. II. Orthography. III. Pronunciation. IV. Grammar.

I. THE ALPHABET.

The Anglo-Saxon alphabet, as known to us in its printed forms, consists of twenty-six characters, about the half of which are Roman, the others of forms peculiarly Saxon. These, mixed with the others, give an aspect to the whole rugged, uncouth, and appalling to an eye accustomed to the roundness and symmetry of the Roman character. This is a first discouragement to the English

student. Next, the task of learning a new alphabet, and the time and application necessary to render it easy and familiar to the reader, often decides the doubting learner against an enterprise so apparently irksome.

The earliest remains extant of Saxon writing are said to be of the seventh century; and the latest of the thirteenth. The black letter seems to have been introduced by William the Conqueror, whose laws are written in Norman French, and in that letter. The full alphabet of Roman character was first used about the beginning of the sixteenth century. But the expression of the same sounds by a different character did not change these sounds, nor the language which they constituted; did not make the language of Alfred a different one from that of Piers Ploughman, of Chaucer, Douglas, Spenser, and Shakespeare, any more than the second revolution, which substituted the Roman for the English black letter, made theirs a different language from that of Pope and Bolingbroke; or the writings of Shakespeare, printed in black letter, different from the same as now done in Roman type. The life of Alfred, written in Latin and in Roman character by Asser, was reprinted by Archbishop Parker in Anglo-Saxon letters. But it is Latin still, although the words are represented by characters different from those of Asser's original. And the extracts given us by Dr. Hickes from the Greek Septuagint, in Anglo-Saxon characters, are Greek still, although the Greek sounds are represented by other types. Here then I ask, why should not this Roman character, with which we are all familiar, be substituted now for the Anglo-Saxon, by printing in the former the works already edited in the latter type? and also the MSS. still inedited? This may be done letter for letter, and would remove entirely the first discouraging obstacle to the general study of the Anglo-Saxon.

II. ORTHOGRAPHY.

In the period during which the Anglo-Saxon alphabet was in use, reading and writing were rare arts. The highest dignitaries of the church subscribed their marks, not knowing how to write their names. Alfred himself was taught

to read in his thirty-sixth year only, or, as some editions of Asser say, in his thirty-ninth. Speaking of learning in his Preface to the Pastoral of Gregory, Alfred says, "Swa clean hi was oth-fallen on Angelkin that swithe few were on behinan Humber the hior thenung cuthon understandan on Englisc, oth furthon an errand y-write of Latin on Englisc areckon. And I ween that not many beyondan Humber nay aren; swa few hior weron that I furthon ane on lepne nay may y-thinkan be-Suthan Thames tha tha I to ric fang." Or, as literally translated into later English by Archbishop Parker, "So clean was it fallen amongst the English nation, that very few were on this side Humber which their service could understand in English, or else furthermore an epistle from Latin into English to declare. And I ween that not many beyond Humber were not. So few of them were, that I also one only may not remember by South Tamise when as I to reign undertook." In this benighted state, so profoundly illiterate, few read at all, and fewer wrote; and the writer having no examples of orthography to recur to, thinking them indeed not important, had for his guide his own ideas only of the power of the letters, unpractised and indistinct as they might be. He brought together, therefore, those letters which he supposed must enter into the composition of the sound he meant to express, and was not even particular in arranging them in the order in which the sounds composing the word followed each other. Thus, *birds* was spelt *brides*; *grass*, *gaers*; *run*, *yrnan*; *cart*, *crætt*; *fresh*, *fersh*. They seemed to suppose, too, that a final vowel was necessary to give sound to the consonant preceding it, and they used for that purpose any vowel indifferently. A *son* was *sunā*, *sunē*, *sunu*; *mæra*, *mære*, *mæro*, *mæru*; *fines*, *limites*; *ge*, *ye*, *y*, *i*, are various spellings of the same prefix. The final *e* mute in English is a remain of this, as in *give*, *love*, *curse*.

The vowels were used indiscriminately also for every vowel sound. Thus,

The comparative ended in *ar*, *er*, *ir*, *or*, *ur*, *yr*.

The superlative " *ast*, *est*, *ist*, *ost*, *ust*, *yst*.

The participle present " *and*, *end*, *ind*, *ond*, *und*, *ynd*.

The participle past " *ad*, *ed*, *id*, *od*, *ud*, *yd*.

Other examples are, *betweox*, *betwix*, *betwox*, *betwux*, *betwyx*, for *betwixt*.

" *egland*, *igland*, *yglānd*, for *island*.

Of this promiscuous use of the vowels we have also abundant remains still in English. For according to the powers given to our letters we often use them indifferently for the same sound, as in *bulwark*, *assert*, *stir*, *work*, *lurk*, *myrtle*. The single word *many*, in Anglo-Saxon, was spelt, as Dr. Hickes has observed, in twenty different ways; to wit, *mænigeo*, *mænio*, *mæniu*, *menio*, *meniu*, *mænigo*, *mænego*, *manige*, *menigo*, *manegeo*, *mænegeo*, *menegio*, *mænygeo*, *menigeo*, *manegu*, *mænigu*, *menegu*, *menego*, *menigu*, *manigo*. To prove, indeed, that every one spelt according to his own notions, without regard to any standard, we have only to compare different editions of the same composition. Take, for example, Alfred's Preface to Gregory's Pastoral before cited, as published in different editions:

Swa clæne hio wæs othfeallenu on angelkynne thaette swithe feawe wæron behionan Humbre the hiora
 heo othfeallen angelcynne that feawa beheonan hira
 fewa

thenunga cuthen understandan on Englisc oththe furthum an ærendgewrit of Lædene on Englisc areccan &
 theninga cuthon understandan Ænglisc furthun ærendgewryt Ledene Ænglisc areccan
 thenunge

ic wene thaette nauht monige begeondan Humbre næren.

that noht begiondan næron.
 naht næron.

This unsettled orthography renders it necessary to swell the volume of the dictionaries, by giving to each word as many places in order of the alphabet as there are different modes of spelling it; and in proportion as this is omitted, the difficulty of finding the words increases on the student.

Since, then, it is apparent that the Anglo-Saxon writers had established no particular standard of orthography, but each followed arbitrarily his own mode of combining the letters, we are surely at liberty equally to adopt any mode which, establishing uniformity, may be more consonant with the power of the

letters, and with the orthography of the present dialect, as established by usage. The latter attention has the advantage of exhibiting more evidently the legitimate parentage of the two dialects.

III. PRONUNCIATION.

To determine what that was among the Anglo-Saxons, our means are as defective as to determine the long-agitated question what was the original pronunciation of the Greek and Latin languages. The presumption is certainly strong that in Greece and Italy, the countries occupied by those languages, their pronunciation has been handed down, by tradition, more nearly than it can be known to other countries: and the rather, as there has been no particular point of time at which those ancient languages were changed into the modern ones occupying the same grounds. They have been gradually worn down to their present forms by time, and changes of modes and circumstances. In like manner there has been no particular point of time at which the Anglo-Saxon has been changed into its present English form. The languages of Europe have generally, in like manner, undergone a gradual metamorphosis, some of them in name as well as in form. We should presume, therefore, that in those countries of Great Britain which were occupied earliest, longest, and latest by the Saxon immigrants, the pronunciation of their language has been handed down more nearly than elsewhere; and should be searched for in the provincial dialects of those countries. But the fact is, that these countries have divaricated in their dialects, so that it would be difficult to decide among them which is the most genuine. Under these doubts, therefore, we may as well take the pronunciation now in general use as the legitimate standard, and that from which it is most promotive of our object to infer the Anglo-Saxon pronunciation. It is, indeed, the forlorn hope of all aim at their probable pronunciation; for were we to regard the powers of the letters only, no human organ could articulate their uncouth jumble. We will suppose, therefore, the power of the letters to have been generally the same in Anglo-Saxon as now in English; and to produce the

same sounds we will combine them, as nearly as may be, conformably with the present English orthography. This is, indeed, a most irregular and equivocal standard; but a conformity with it will bring the two dialects nearer together in sound and semblance, and facilitate the transition from the one to the other more auspiciously than a rigorous adherence to any uniform system of orthography which speculation might suggest.

I will state some instances only (referring to Dr. Hickes for more) of the unskilful and inconsistent uses of the letters by the Anglo-Saxons, in proof of the necessity of changing them, to produce, to a modern reader, the very sounds which we suppose them to have intended by their confused combinations. Their vowels, promiscuously used, as before observed, must all be freely changed to those used in corresponding words in English orthography.

<i>b</i> sounds as <i>v</i> , as in <i>ober</i> , <i>over</i> .		
<i>c</i>	"	<i>g</i> , " <i>fic</i> , <i>fig</i> .
"	"	<i>j</i> , " <i>ceole</i> , <i>jowl</i> .
"	"	<i>k</i> , " <i>tacn</i> , <i>token</i> ; <i>bacen</i> , <i>baked</i> ; <i>cind</i> , <i>kind</i> .
"	"	<i>s</i> , " <i>cedar</i> , <i>cedar</i> .
"	"	<i>ch</i> , " <i>ceak</i> , <i>cheek</i> .
<i>eg</i>	"	<i>dge</i> , " <i>brieg</i> , <i>bridge</i> .
<i>d</i>	"	<i>th</i> , " <i>worden</i> , or <i>worthen</i> ; <i>mid</i> or <i>mith</i> , <i>with</i> .
<i>f</i>	"	<i>v</i> , " <i>delfan</i> , <i>to delve</i> ; <i>yfel</i> , <i>evil</i> .
<i>v</i>	"	<i>f</i> , " <i>vot</i> , <i>foot</i> .
<i>g</i>	"	<i>c</i> , " <i>gamel</i> , <i>camel</i> .
"	"	<i>ga</i> , " <i>gandra</i> , <i>gander</i> ; <i>garlec</i> , <i>garlic</i> .
"	"	<i>ge</i> , " <i>angel</i> .
"	"	<i>w</i> , " <i>laga</i> , <i>law</i> ; <i>agen</i> , <i>own</i> ; <i>fugel</i> , <i>fowl</i> .
"	"	<i>y</i> . This is its most general power, as <i>ge</i> , <i>ye</i> ; <i>gear</i> , <i>year</i> ; <i>burigan</i> , <i>bury</i> ; <i>geoc</i> , <i>yoke</i> ; <i>ego</i> , <i>eye</i> ; <i>ge</i> , <i>ye</i> , <i>y</i> .
<i>sc</i>	"	<i>sh</i> , as in <i>scame</i> , <i>shame</i> ; <i>scip</i> , <i>ship</i> ; <i>score</i> , <i>shore</i> ; <i>scyl</i> , <i>shall</i> .
<i>y</i>	"	<i>ou</i> , " <i>ynce</i> , <i>ounce</i> .
<i>x</i>	"	<i>sh</i> , " <i>fixas</i> , <i>fishes</i> ; <i>axan</i> , <i>ashes</i> .
"	"	<i>sk</i> , " <i>axian</i> , <i>ask</i> .

And finally, in the words of Dr. Hickes, "Demum quomodo Anglo-Saxonicae

voces factae sunt Anglicae mutando literas ejusdem organi, asperando lenes, et leniendo asperas, vocales, diphthongos, et interdum consonantes leviter mutando, auferendo initiales et finales syllabas, praesertim terminationem modi infinitivi, praeterea addendo, transponendo, et interponendo literas, et voces quoque syn-
copando, exemplis docendum est."

IV. GRAMMAR.

Some observations on Anglo-Saxon Grammar may show how much easier that also may be rendered to the English student. Dr. Hickes may certainly be considered as the father of this branch of modern learning. He has been the great restorer of the Anglo-Saxon dialect from the oblivion into which it was fast falling. His labors in it were great, and his learning not less than his labors. His Grammar may be said to be the only one we yet possess: for that edited at Oxford in 1711 is but an extract from Hickes, and the principal merit of Mrs. Elstob's is, that it is written in English, without any thing original in it. Some others have been written, taken also, and almost entirely from Hickes. In his time there was too exclusive a prejudice in favor of the Greek and Latin languages. They were considered as the standards of perfection, and the endeavor generally was to force other languages to a conformity with these models. But nothing can be more radically unlike than the frames of the ancient languages, Southern and Northern, of the Greek and Latin languages, from those of the Gothic family. Of this last are the Anglo-Saxon and English; and had Dr. Hickes, instead of keeping his eye fixed on the Greek and Latin languages, as his standard, viewed the Anglo-Saxon in its conformity with the English only, he would greatly have enlarged the advantages for which we are already so much indebted to him. His labors, however, have advanced us so far on the right road, and a correct pursuit of it will be a just homage to him.

A noun is to be considered under its accidents of genders, cases, and numbers. The word gender is, in nature, synonymous with sex. To all the subjects of the animal kingdom nature has given sex, and that is twofold only, male or

female, masculine or feminine. Vegetable and mineral subjects have no distinction of sex, consequently are of no gender. Words, like other inanimate things, have no sex, are of no gender. Yet in the construction of the Greek and Latin languages, and of the modern ones of the same family, their adjectives being varied in termination, and made distinctive of animal sex, in conformity with the nouns or names of animal subjects, the two real genders, which nature has established, are distinguished in these languages. But, not stopping here, they have by usage, thrown a number of unsexual subjects into the sexual classes, leaving the residuary mass to a third class, which grammarians call neutral,—that is to say, of no gender or sex: and some Latin grammarians have so far lost sight of the real and natural genders as to ascribe to that language seven genders, the masculine, feminine, neuter, gender common to two, common to three, the doubtful, and the epicene; than which nothing can be more arbitrary, and nothing more useless. But the language of the Anglo-Saxons and English is based on principles totally different from those of the Greek and Latin, and is constructed on laws peculiar and idiomatic to itself. Its adjectives have no changes of termination on account of gender, number or case. Each has a single one applicable to every noun, whether it be the name of a thing having sex, or not. To ascribe gender to nouns in such a case would be to embarrass the learner with unmeaning and useless distinctions. It will be said, *e. g.*, that a priest is of one gender, and a priestess of another; a poet of one, a poetess of another, &c.; and that therefore the words designating them must be of different genders. I say, not at all; because although the thing designated may have sex, the word designating it, like other inanimate things, has no sex, no gender. In Latin we well know that the thing may be of one gender and the word designating it of another. See Martial vii., Epig. 17. The ascription of gender to it is artificial and arbitrary, and, in English and Anglo-Saxon, absolutely useless. Lowthe, therefore, among the most correct of our English grammarians, has justly said that in the nouns of the English language there is no other distinction of gender but that of nature, its adjectives admitting no change but of the degrees of comparison. We must guard against the conclusion of Dr. Hickes that the change of termination in the Anglo-Saxon adjectives, as *god*, *gode*, for example,

is an indication of gender ; this, like others of his examples of inflection, is only an instance of unsettled orthography. In the languages acknowledged to ascribe genders to their words, as Gr., Lat., Italian, Spanish, French, their dictionaries indicate the gender of every noun ; but the A. S. and English dictionaries give no such indication ; a proof of the general sense that gender makes no part of the character of the noun. We may safely therefore dismiss the learning of genders from our language, whether in its ancient or modern form.

2. Our law of Cases is different. They exist in nature, according to the difference of accident they announce. No language can be without them, and it is an error to say that the Greek is without an ablative. Its ablative indeed is always like its dative ; but were that sufficient to deny its existence, we might equally say that the Latins had no ablative plural, because in all nouns of every declension, their ablative plural is the same with the dative. It would be to say that to go *to* a place, or *from* a place, means the same thing. The grammarians of Port-Royal, therefore, have justly restored the ablative to Greek nouns. Our cases are generally distinguished by the aid of the prepositions *of*, *to*, *by*, *from*, or *with*, but sometimes also by change of termination. But these changes are not so general or difficult as to require, or to be capable of a distribution into declensions. Yet Dr. Hickes, having in view the Saxon declensions of the Latin, and ten of the Greek language, has given six, and Thwaytes seven to the Anglo-Saxon. The whole of them, however, are comprehended under the three simple canons following :

- (1.) The datives and ablatives plural of all nouns end in *um*.
- (2.) Of the other cases, some nouns inflect their genitive singular only, and some their nominative, accusative and vocative plural also in *s*, as in English.
- (3.) Others, preserving the primitive form in their nominative and vocative singular, inflect all the other cases and numbers in *en*.

3. Numbers. Every language, as I presume, has so formed its nouns and verbs as to distinguish a single and a plurality of subjects, and all, as far as I know, have been contented with the simple distinction of singular and plural, except the Greeks, who have interposed between them a Dual number, so distinctly formed by actual changes of termination and inflection, as to leave no doubt of its real dis-

inction from the other numbers. But they do not uniformly use their dual for its appropriate purpose. The number two is often expressed plurally, and sometimes by a dual noun and plural verb. Dr. Hickes supposes the Anglo-Saxon to have a dual number also, not going through the whole vocabulary of nouns and verbs, as in Greek, but confined to two particular pronouns, i. e. *wit* and *yit*, which he translates we two, and ye two. But Benson renders *wit* by *nos*, and does not give *yit* at all. And is it worth while to embarrass grammar with an extra distinction for two or three, or half a dozen words? And why may not *wit*, we two, and *yit*, ye two, be considered plural, as well as we three, or we four? as *duo*, *ambo*, with the Latins? We may surely say then that neither the Anglo-Saxon nor English have a dual number.

4. Verbs, moods. To the verbs in Anglo-Saxon Dr. Hickes gives six moods. The Greeks, besides the four general moods, Indicative, Subjunctive, Imperative, and Infinitive, have really an Optative mood, distinguished from the others by actual differences of termination. And some Latin grammarians, besides the Optative, have added, in that language, a Potential mood; neither of them distinguished by differences of termination or inflection. They have therefore been disallowed by later and sounder grammarians; and we may, in like manner, disembarass our Anglo-Saxon and English from the Optatives and Potentials of Dr. Hickes.

Supines and Gerunds.

He thinks, too, that the Anglo-Saxon has supines and gerunds among its variations; accidents certainly peculiar to Latin verbs only. He considers *lufian*, to love, as the infinitive, and *to lufian*, a supine. The exclusion, therefore, of the preposition *to*, makes with him the infinitive, while we have ever considered it as the essential sign of that mood. And what all grammarians have hitherto called the infinitive, he considers as a supine or gerund. His examples are given in Anglo-Saxon and Latin, but I will add the equivalent Greek and English for illustration.

1 MARK, 24 :—Come thu us to for-spillan ?

Venisti nos *perditum* ?

Ἦλθες ἀπολεσαι ἡμας ;

Comest thou to destroy us ?

9 LUKE, 1 :—And he him an-wield sealed untrimness to healan, and devil-sickness ut to a-driva n.

Potestatem *curandi* infirmitates, et *ejiciendi* dæmonia.

ἐξουσιαν ἐπὶ πάντα τὰ δαιμονία καὶ νοσοῦς θεραπεύειν.

Authority over all demons, and to cure diseases.

2 MATT., 13 :—Herod seeketh that child to for-spillan.

Herodes quærit puerum ad *perdendum* eum.

Ἡρῶδης ζητεῖν τὸ παιδίον τοῦ ἀπολεσαι αὐτό.

Herod seeketh the child to destroy him.

1 LUKE, 77 :—To sellen his folc hæle y-wit.

Ad dandam scientiam salutis plebi suæ.

τοῦ δοῦναι γνῶσιν σωτηρίας τῷ λαῷ αὐτοῦ.

To give knowledge of salvation to his people.

I ask then if ἀπολεσαι, θεραπεύειν, δοῦναι, are supines or gerunds ? Why then should to for-spillan, tō healan, to a-drivan, to sellen, or, to destroy, to heal, to cure, to drive, to give, be necessarily supines or gerunds ? The fact is only that the Latins express by these inflections, peculiar to themselves, what other languages do by their infinitives.

From these aberrations, into which our great Anglo-Saxon leader, Dr. Hickes, has been seduced by too much regard to the structure of the Greek and Latin languages and too little to their radical difference from that of the Gothic family, we have to recall our footsteps into the right way, and we shall find our path rendered smoother, plainer, and more direct to the object of profiting of the light which each dialect throws on the other. And this, even as to the English language, appears to have been the opinion of Wallis, the best of our English grammarians, who, in the preface to his English grammar, says : “ Omnes ad Latinæ linguæ normam hanc nostram Anglicanam nimium exigentes multa

inutilia, præcepta de nominum casibus, generibus et declinationibus, atque verborum temporibus, modis et conjugationibus, de nominum item et verborum regimine, aliisque similibus tradiderunt, quæ a lingua nostra sunt prorsus aliena, adeoque confusionem potius et obscuritatem pariunt, quam explicationi inserviunt?"

Having removed, then, this cumbrous scaffolding, erected by too much learning, and obscuring instead of enlightening our Anglo-Saxon structure, I will proceed to give a specimen of the manner in which I think might be advantageously edited any future republications of the Anglo-Saxon writings which we already possess in print, or any MSS. which may hereafter be given to us through the medium of the press.

I take my specimen from Thwaites' Heptateuch, beginning with the 1st chapter of Genesis. I give in one column the Anglo-Saxon text, in the Anglo-Saxon character, preserving letter for letter, the orthography of the Saxon original; in another column the same text in the Anglo-Saxon character also, spelt with a combined regard to the power of the letters, to English orthography and English pronunciation. I interline a version verbally exact, placing every English word against its Anglo-Saxon root, without regard to the change of acceptation it has undergone in time; as e. g. "the earth was *idle* and empty," 1 Gen. 2, instead of the modern words "without form and void," and the "*ἀόρατος καὶ ἀκατάσχευατος*" of the LXX., leaving to the ingenuity of the reader to trace the history of the change. In rendering the Anglo-Saxon into the corresponding English word, I have considered as English not only what is found in the oldest English writers, in glossaries and dictionaries, but in the Provincial dialects also, and in common parlance of unlettered people, who have preserved more of the ancient language than those whose style has been polished by education. Grammar, too, is disregarded, my principal object being to manifest the identity of the two languages. This version is rendered more uncouth by the circumstances that, 1. The ordo verborum of the Anglo-Saxon is not exactly the same as the English. 2. They used much oftener the noun without the article. 3. They frequently use their oblique cases without a preposition prefixed, the English very rarely. In this verbal version these omissions are to be understood.

The Anglo-Saxon writings, in this familiar form, are evidently nothing but old English; and we may join conscientiously in the exhortation of Archbishop Parker, in his preface to Asser, "Omnes qui in regni institutis addiscendis, elaboraverint, cohortabor ut *exiguo labore, seu pene nullo*, hujus sibi linguæ cognitionem acquirant?"

As we are possessed in America of the printed editions of Anglo-Saxon writings, they furnish a fit occasion for this country to make some return to the older nations for the science for which we are indebted to them; and in this task I hope an honorable part will in time be borne by our University, for which, at an hour of life too late for any thing elaborate, I hazard these imperfect hints, for consideration chiefly on a subject on which I pretend not to be profound. The publication of the inedited MSS. which exist in the libraries of Great Britain only, must depend on the learned of that nation. Their means of science are great. They have done much, and much is yet expected from them. Nor will they disappoint us. Our means are as yet small; but the widow's mite was piously given and kindly accepted. How much would contribute to the happiness of these two nations a brotherly emulation in doing good to each other, rather than the mutual vituperations so unwisely and unjustifiably sometimes indulged in by both. And this too by men on both sides of the water, who think themselves of a superior order of understanding, and some of whom are truly of an elevation far above the ordinary stature of the human mind. No two people on earth can so much help or hurt each other. Let us then yoke ourselves jointly to the same car of mutual happiness, and vie in common efforts to do each other all the good we can — to reflect on each other the lights of mutual science particularly, and the kind affections of kindred blood. Be it our task, in the case under consideration, to reform and republish, in forms more advantageous, what we already possess, and theirs to add to the common stock the inedited treasures which have been too long buried in their depositories.

P. S. January, 1825. In the year 1818, by authority of the legislature of Virginia, a plan for the establishment of an University was prepared and pro-

posed to them. In that plan the Anglo-Saxon language was comprehended as a part of the circle of instruction to be given to the students; and the preceding pages were then committed to writing for the use of the University. I pretend not to be an Anglo-Saxon scholar. From an early period of my studies, indeed, I have been sensible of the importance of making it a part of the regular education of our youth; and at different times, as leisure permitted, I applied myself to the study of it, with some degree of attention. But my life has been too busy in pursuits of another character to have made much proficiency in this. The leading idea which very soon impressed itself on my mind, and which has continued to prevail through the whole of my observations on the language, was, that it was nothing more than the old English of a period of some ages earlier than that of *Piers Ploughman*; and under this view my cultivation of it has been continued. It was apparent to me that the labors of Dr. Hickes, and other very learned men, have been employed in a very unfortunate direction, in endeavors to give it the complicated structure of the Greek and Latin languages. I have just now received a copy of a new work, by Mr. Bosworth, on the elements of Anglo-Saxon Grammar, and it quotes two other works, by Turner and Jamieson, both of great erudition, but not yet known here. Mr. Bosworth's is, indeed, a treasure of that venerable learning. It proves the assiduity with which he has cultivated it, the profound knowledge in it which he has attained, and that he has advanced far beyond all former grammarians in the science of its structure. Yet, I own, I was disappointed on finding that in proportion as he has advanced on and beyond the footsteps of his predecessors, he has the more embarrassed the language with rules and distinctions, in imitation of the grammars of Greek and Latin; has led it still further from its genuine type of old English, and increased its difficulties by the multitude and variety of new and minute rules with which he has charged it. I had the less expected this from observations made early in the work, on "the total disregard of the Anglo-Saxons of any settled rules of orthography, their confounding the letters, using them indifferently for each other, and especially the vowels and diphthongs [p. 46], on the frequent transpositions of their letters, and the variety of ways of writing the same word by different Anglo-Saxon authors;" giving as exam-

ples, six ways of spelling the word "youth," and twenty ways of spelling "many;" observing that, in the comparative degree, the last syllable, *er*, was spelt with all the vowels indifferently; so also the syllable *est*, of the superlative degree, and so the participial terminations of *end* and *ed* [p. 54]; adding many other examples of a use entirely promiscuous of the vowels, and much so of the consonants. And in page 249 he says: "It must be evident that learning was not so common in the Saxon era as at the present time. Our ancestors, having few opportunities of literary acquirements, could not have determined upon fixed rules for orthography, any more than illiterate persons in the present day, who, having been employed in manual labor, could avail themselves of the facilities which were offered. Hence arose the differences observable in spelling the same words in Saxon." And again, in a note, p. 253, he says: "Those changes in Saxon, which are denominated dialects, appear in reality only to be the alterations observed in the progress of the language, as it gradually flowed from the Saxon, varying, or casting off many of its inflections, till it settled in the form of the present English. This progressive transformation of the Anglo-Saxon into our present form of speech will be evident by the following examples, taken from the translations of the most learned men of the age to which they are referred." And he proceeds to give specimens of the Paternosters of the years 890, 930, 1130, 1160, 1180, 1250, 1260, 1380, 1430, 1500, 1526, 1537, 1541, 1556, 1611, that is, from the time of Alfred to that of Shakspeare. These obviously prove the gradual changes of the language from the Anglo-Saxon form to that of the present English, and that there was no particular point of time at which the Anglo-Saxon was superseded by the English dialect; for dialects we may truly call them, of the same language, separated by lines of time instead of space. And these specimens prove also that the language of Alfred was, no more than that of Piers Ploughman, a different one from that we now speak. In like manner, the language of France, cotemporary with our Anglo-Saxon, was as different from modern French, as the Anglo-Saxon from modern English; and their Romanum-rusticum, or Romain-rustique, as it was called, has changed insensibly, as our Anglo-Saxon, to the form now spoken. Yet so much of the fundamental idiom remains the same in both, that to read and understand the

elder dialect, they need but a glossary for words lost by disuse. I will make one more quotation from Mr. Bosworth, because it confirms what I have said of the scholastic bias of our early authors to place our old language in the line of Latin and Greek. "Hickes," says he, page 213, note 2, "indisputably one of the most learned of those who can be said to have examined, with a critical eye, our Saxon literature, influenced by the desire of reducing every thing to some classical standard, a prejudice not uncommon in the age in which he wrote, endeavors, with greater zeal than success, to show that the writers whom he was recommending to the world [the Anglo-Saxon poets] observed the legitimate rules of Latin prosody, and measured their feet by syllabic quantity." Notwithstanding these proofs that our author was fully aware of the unsettled and uncertain orthography of the Anglo-Saxons, and his particular observations, p. 53, 54, that "the final letters of words are often omitted," and "that the different letters suffer very frequent changes of position," he proceeds, in conformity with preceding authorities, which indeed support him, to make genders, cases, and declensions of nouns to depend on their terminating vowel, p. 80, 81, 82, 83, 94; the formations of different parts of verbs to depend on the collocation of the letters [p. 143], and other formations [p. 181] and even regimen [p. 202] to depend on the final syllable. And this leads to such an infinitude of minute rules and observances, as are beyond the power of any human memory to retain. If, indeed, this be the true genius of the Anglo-Saxon language, then its difficulties go beyond its worth, and render a knowledge of it no longer a compensation for the time and labor its acquisition will require; and, in that case, I would recommend its abandonment in our University, as an unattainable and unprofitable pursuit. But if, as I believe, we may consider it as merely an antiquated form of our present language, if we may throw aside the learned difficulties which mask its real character, liberate it from these foreign shackles, and proceed to apply ourselves to it with little more preparation than to Piers Ploughman, Douglas, or Chaucer, then I am persuaded its acquisition will require little time or labor, and will richly repay us by the intimate insight it will give us into the genuine structure, powers and meanings of the language we now read and speak. We shall then read Shakspeare and Milton with a superior

degree of intelligence and delight, heightened by the new and delicate shades of meaning developed to us by a knowledge of the original sense of the same words. This rejection of the learned labors of our Anglo-Saxon Doctors, may be considered, perhaps, as a rebellion against science. My hope, however, is, that it may prove a revolution. Two great works, indeed, will be wanting to effect all its advantages. 1. A Grammar on the simple principles of the English grammar, analogising the idiom, the rules and principles of the one and the other, eliciting their common origin, the identity of their structure, laws and composition, and their total unlikeness to the genius of the Greek and Latin. 2. A Dictionary, on the plan of Stephens or Scapula, in which the Anglo-Saxon roots should be arranged alphabetically, and the derivatives from each root, Saxon and English, entered under it in their proper order and connection. Such works as these, with new editions of the Saxon writings, on the plan I venture to propose, would show that the Anglo-Saxon is really old English, little more difficult to understand than works we possess, and read, and still call English. They would recruit and renovate the vigor of the English language, too much impaired by the neglect of its ancient constitution and dialects, and would remove, for the student, the principal difficulties of ascending to the source of the English language, the main object of what has been here proposed.

OBSERVATIONS ON ANGLO-SAXON GRAMMAR.

Pronunciation.—Different nations use different alphabets for expressing the sounds of their languages; and nations which use the same alphabet assign very different powers to the same characters. Hence, to enable persons to learn the language of other countries, grammars are composed explaining to what letters and combinations of them, in their own language, the letters and combinations of them in another are equivalent. The pronunciation of the living languages is deposited in records of this kind, as doubtless was that of the Greek and Latin languages, now considered as dead. These evidences of their pronunciation, however, being lost, we resort to the countries in which these languages were once spoken, and where they have been insensibly altered to what is now spoken there; and we presume that, the same alphabetical characters being still preserved there, the powers assigned to them are those handed down by tradition, with some changes, no doubt, but yet tolerably correct in the main: and that the present pronunciation of those characters by the inhabitants of the same country is better evidence of their ancient power than any other to be obtained at this day. Hence it is presumed that the pronunciation of the Greek and Roman characters, now practised by the modern Greeks and Italians, is nearer probably to that of the ancient Greeks and Romans than the sounds assigned to the same characters by any other nation. The Anglo-Saxon is also become a dead language. Its alphabet is preserved; but if any written evidences exist of the powers assigned to its different characters, it is unknown to me. On the contrary, I believe that the expressions of the sounds of their

language by alphabetical characters had not been long and generally enough practised to settle an uniform power in each letter or combination of letters. This I infer from their infinitely diversified modes of spelling the same word. For example, the word *many* is found spelt in twenty different manners. To supply evidence, therefore, of the pronunciation of their words, we should, I think, resort to the pronunciation of the corresponding words in modern English. For as the Anglo-Saxon was insensibly changed into the present English language, it is probable the English have the pronunciation, as well as the words, by tradition. Indeed, I consider the actual pronunciation of a word by the English as better evidence of its pronunciation by their Anglo-Saxon ancestors than the multiform representation of it by letters which they have left us. The following examples will give an idea of the appeal I make to English pronunciation for the power of the Saxon letters, and sound of the Saxon words.

The Anglo-Saxon *c* in *cy*. *cýnpic* was probably sounded as *k* in the corresponding English words *kine*, *kingric*.

ci. in *cierpe* = *ch*, in *chest*.

eo. in *eop*, *eopen* = *yo*, in *you*, *your*.

" in *þreo*, *reofon* = *e*, in *three*, *seven*.

" in *feopen* = *o*, in *four*.

ea. in *anfeald*, *twýfeald* = *a*, or *o*, in *onefold*, *twofold*.

ge. prefix = *y*, in *yclept*, or *a*. in *adown*, *along*, *aside*, *among*, *about*, etc.

io. in *rioc*, *riolc*, *riolfor* = *i*, in *sick*, *silk*, *silver*.

rc in *birceop*, *judeirc*, *rcomeare* = *sh*, in *bishop*, *Jewish*, *shameless*.

Those, I think, who have leisure and knowledge of the subject, could not render it a greater service than by new editions of the Saxon writings still extant, digested under four columns, whereof the first should present the text in the Saxon character and original loose orthography; the second the same text in Saxon characters reformed to modern English orthography as nearly as allowable; the third, the same text in the English character and orthography; the fourth, an English version, as literally expressed, both as to words and their

arrangement, as any indulgences of grammar or of obsolete or provincial terms, would tolerate. I will exhibit the following passage from Alfred's Orosius, l. i., p. 23, as a specimen :

1. Saxon Orthography.	2. Saxon Orthography reformed.	3. English Character and Orthography.	4. English Literal Version.
<p>he þær mid þæm fýrre- -um mannun on þæm lande. *næfðe he þeah ma þonne tpen- tig hpyðena. 7 tpen- tig fceapa. 7 tpenzig fpyña. 7 þat lýtle þat he epeðe. he epeðe mid hoppan. ac hýpa ap ir mært on þæm gafol þe þa Finnar him gýlbað. þat ga- fol hið on ðeopa fel- lum. 7 on Fugela fe- ðepum. 7 hpæler þane. 7 on þæm fciþ- -napum þe beoð of hpæler hýðe gepophc 7 of feoler :. Ægh- -pile gýlt be hýr ge- -hýpðum. fe hýpðer- ta fceal gýlban fiftyne meapðer fell. 7 fip hpaner. 7 an þeþan fel. 7 tyn ambpa feðpa. 7 þe- -pne kýntel oððe ýteþenne. 7 tpegen fciþnapar. ægþer fý fýxtig elne lang. oþer fý of hpæler hýðe gepophc. oþer of fiolet :.</p>	<p>he þær mid þæm fipre- -um mannun in þæm land. næfð he þo ma þen tpen- ty hpyðena. 7 tpen- ty fceep. 7 tpeny fpyne. 7 þat lýtle þat he eapeth he eapeth mid hoppen. ac hýp ap ir mozt on þem gavel þa þe Finnar him ýelðeð. þat ga- vel beoð on ðeep fel- lum. 7 on Fowl fe- þepum. 7 hpæler þone. 7 on þem fhip- -nopum þe beoð of hpæler hibe ypnoght. 7 of fealf. æy- -phile yielb by hýr y- þipðum. fe þipðer- fhall yielben fifteen maptr fell. 7 five painer. 7 an beapen fel. 7 ten hampepa feapepa. 7 beapen kirtle of otterpen. 7 twain fhipnoper. eipep fi fixty ellen long. oþer fi of hpæler hibe ypnoght oþer of fealf.</p>	<p>he (other) was mid them first- -um mannun in them land. naved he tho ma then twen- -ty hryther, & twen- -ty sheep, & twenty swine. & that little that he eared, he eared with hosen, ac hir ar is most in them gavel tha the Fins him yieldeð. that ga- vel beeth in deer fel- lum, & in fowl fea- -therum, & whales -bone, & in them ship- -nopum tha beeth of whales hibe ywrought, & of seals : æy- -while yiel by his y- -birthum. se birthest shall yiel fifteen marts fell, & five rains, & an bearenfell, & ten hampers feathers, & bearen kirtle oth otteren, & twain shipropes, either si sixty ellen long. other si of whales hibe ywrought, other of seals.</p>	<p>he (ohtere) was with the first men in the land, nor had he tho' more then twen- ty cattle, and twen- ty sheep, and twenty swine, and that little that he *eared, he eared with horses, but their rent is most in the gavel that the Fins them yiel. that ga- vel be in deer fells, and in fowl fea- thers, and whale's bone, and in the ship- ropes that be of whale's hibe wrought, and of seals : aye- while (every one) yields by his birth [state] the birthest [state- liest] shall yield fifteen martin's fells, and five ramdeer, and an bear's fell, and ten hampers of feathers, and bear's kirtle or otter's, and twain ship ropes, either is sixty ells long. other is of whale's hide wrought, other of seals.</p>

* ploughed.

* ne-hæfðe contracted.

The dissimilitude between Saxon and English is more in appearance than in reality. It consists chiefly in the difference of character and orthography. Suppress that (as is done in the third column), represent the sounds by the English character and orthography, and it is immediately seen to be, not a different language, but the same in an earlier stage of its progression. And such editions of the Saxon writers, by removing the obstructions of character and false spelling, enabling us to give habitual and true, instead of uncouth and false sounds to words, would promote the study of the English language, by facilitating its examination in its mother state, and making us sensible of delicacies and beauties in it, unfelt but by the few who have had the courage, through piles of rubbish to seek a radical acquaintance with it.

Declensions of Nouns.

One of the simplifications of the study of the Anglo-Saxon which would result from a reformation of its orthography to the present English standard, would be a reduction in the number of the declensions of nouns heretofore assigned to it. The Anglo-Saxons seem to have thought some final vowel necessary to give sound to the preceding consonant, although that vowel was not itself to be sounded; and nothing being less fixed than the power of their vowels and diphthongs, they have used all the vowels indiscriminately for this purpose. Thus,

The word Son, in modern English, was spelt by them *runa, rune, runu*. Free; *freah, fneo, fpeoh, fpig*. Meal; *mela, mele, melu*. Man; *man, mon*. Milk; *meolc, meoloc, meoluc, milc*. Mickle; *micel, mucel, mycel, mycle, myccle*. Pepper; *peopen, peppor, pipor*.

Notwithstanding these various orthographies, all, I presume, represent the same sound, and probably that still retained by the English. For I can more easily suppose that an unlettered people used various modes of spelling the same word, than that they had so many different words to express the same thing

The *e* final of the English is a relict of the Anglo-Saxon practice of ending a word with a final vowel. A difference of orthography, therefore, and still less a mere difference of final vowel is not sufficient to characterize a different declension of nouns. I should deem an unequivocal change in the sound necessary to constitute an inflection; and a difference in the inflections necessary to form a class of nouns into a different declension. On these principles I should reduce Thwaite's seven declensions to four, as follows:

1st declension, being Thwaite's 5th and 6th:

<i>Sing. Nom.</i>	{	piln	} = piln	<i>Sing. Nom.</i>	{	runu	} run
<i>Acc.</i>							
<i>Voc.</i>							
<i>Gen.</i>							
<i>Dat.</i>	{	pilne					
<i>Abl.</i>							
<i>Plur. Nom.</i>				{	pilna-e-o-u		
<i>Gen.</i>							
<i>Acc.</i>	{	pilna					
<i>Voc.</i>							
<i>Dat.</i>			{	pilnum . . pilnum			
<i>Abl.</i>							
<i>Sing. Nom.</i>	{	runa					
<i>Acc.</i>							
<i>Voc.</i>							
<i>Plur. Nom.</i>			{	runa. u			
<i>Gen.</i>							
<i>Acc.</i>	{	runum . . runum					
<i>Dat.</i>							
<i>Abl.</i>							

2d declension, comprehending Thwaite's 3d and 4th:

<i>Sing. Nom.</i>	{	andgit	} = andgit	<i>Sing. Nom.</i>	{	porþ	} porþ	
<i>Acc.</i>								
<i>Voc.</i>								
<i>Dat.</i>								
<i>Abl.</i>	{	andgite-a						
<i>Plur. Gen.</i>				{	andgita			
<i>Acc.</i>						{		andgitu
<i>Voc.</i>								
<i>Nom.</i>	{	andgiteŕ . . = andgiteŕ						
<i>Sing. Gen.</i>				{	andgitum . . andgitum			
<i>Dat.</i>								
<i>Abl.</i>								
<i>Sing. Nom.</i>	{	porþe-a						
<i>Acc.</i>								
<i>Voc.</i>								
<i>Plur. Nom.</i>			{	porþa				
<i>Gen.</i>								
<i>Acc.</i>	{	porþe						
<i>Dat.</i>					{	porþŕ . . : porþŕ		
<i>Gen.</i>								
<i>Plur. Dat.</i>			{	porþum . . porþum				
<i>Abl.</i>								

3d declension, comprehending Thwaite's 1st and 7th :

<i>Sing. Nom.</i>	{	rmið	}	rmið	<i>Sing. Nom.</i>	{	fneo-oh	}	fne		
<i>Acc.</i>										<i>Acc.</i>	
<i>Voc.</i>										<i>Dat.</i>	
<i>Dat.</i>										<i>Abl.</i>	
<i>Plur. Gen.</i>	{	rmiðe	}	rmið	<i>Plur. Gen.</i>	{	fneoh	}	fne		
<i>Sing. Gen.</i>										<i>Voc.</i>	
<i>Plur. Nom.</i>										<i>Acc.</i>	
<i>Acc.</i>										<i>Plur. Gen.</i>	
<i>Sing. Gen.</i>	{	rmiðer	}	rmiðr	<i>Sing. Gen.</i>	{	fneor	}	=fner		
<i>Plur. Nom.</i>										<i>Acc.</i>	
<i>Acc.</i>										<i>Voc.</i>	
<i>Voc.</i>										<i>Plur. Gen.</i>	
<i>Dat.</i>	{	rmiðar	}	rmiðar	<i>Sing. Gen.</i>	{	fneum . .	}	fneum		
<i>Abl.</i>										<i>Plur. Dat.</i>	
					<i>Abl.</i>						

4th declension, being Thwaite's 2d :

<i>Sing. Nom.</i>	{	pitega	= piteg
<i>Voc.</i>			
<i>Gen.</i>			
<i>Dat.</i>			
<i>Acc.</i>	{	pitegan	}
<i>Plur. Abl.</i>			
<i>Nom.</i>			
<i>Acc.</i>			
<i>Voc.</i>	{	pitegena	} pitegen
<i>Gen.</i>			
<i>Dat.</i>			
<i>Abl.</i>			
		pitegum	pitegum

In stating the declensions here the first column presents the Anglo-Saxon orthography, the varieties of which have been deemed sufficient to constitute inflections and declensions. The second column presents a reformed orthography, supposed equivalent to the other as to sound, and consequently showing that a variety in spelling where there is a sameness of sound does not constitute an inflection, or change of declination.

The four declensions, reformed to an uniform orthography, would stand thus :

I. <i>Sing. Nom.</i> } <i>Gen.</i> } <i>Dat.</i> } <i>Acc.</i> } <i>Voc.</i> } <i>Abl.</i> } <i>piln, run</i> <i>Plur. Nom.</i> } <i>Gen.</i> } <i>Acc.</i> } <i>Voc.</i> } <i>Dat.</i> } <i>pilnum, runum</i> <i>Abl.</i> }	II. <i>Sing. Nom.</i> } <i>Dat.</i> } <i>Acc.</i> } <i>Voc.</i> } <i>Abl.</i> } <i>andgit, porð</i> <i>Plur. Nom.</i> } <i>Gen.</i> } <i>Acc.</i> } <i>Voc.</i> } <i>Sing. Gen.</i> } <i>andgitr, porðr</i> <i>Plur. Dat.</i> } <i>andgitum, porðum</i> <i>Abl.</i> }
III. <i>Sing. Nom.</i> } <i>Dat.</i> } <i>Acc.</i> } <i>Voc.</i> } <i>rmið, fre</i> <i>Abl.</i> } <i>Plur. Gen.</i> } <i>Sing. Gen.</i> } <i>Plur. Nom.</i> } <i>rmiðr, fregr</i> <i>Acc.</i> } <i>Voc.</i> } <i>Dat.</i> } <i>rmiðum, freum</i> <i>Abl.</i> }	IV. <i>Sing. Nom.</i> } <i>piteg</i> <i>Voc.</i> } <i>Gen.</i> } <i>Dat.</i> } <i>Acc.</i> } <i>Abl.</i> } <i>pitegen</i> <i>Plur. Nom.</i> } <i>Gen.</i> } <i>Acc.</i> } <i>Voc.</i> } <i>Dat.</i> } <i>pitegum</i> <i>Abl.</i> }

In this scheme, then,

The first declension has no inflection, but for the dative and ablative plurals, which end in um.

The second inflects its genitive singular in r, and dative and ablative plural in um.

The third inflects its genitive, singular, nominative, accusative, and vocative plural in r; and dative and ablative plural in um.

The fourth preserving its radical form in the nominative and vocative singular, inflects all its other cases in en, except the dative and ablative plural, which, in all the declensions, end invariably in um.

It may be said that this is a bold proposition, amounting to a change of the language. But not so at all. What constitutes a language is a system of articulated sounds, to each of which an idea is attached. The artificial representation of these sounds on paper is a distinct thing. Surely there were languages before the invention of letters; and there are now languages never yet expressed in letters. To express the sounds of a language perfectly, every letter of its alphabet should have but a single power, and those letters only should be used whose powers successively pronounced would produce the sound required. The

Italian orthography is more nearly in this state than any other with which I am acquainted; the French and English the farthest from it. Would a reformation of the orthography of the latter languages change them? If the French word *aimaient*, for example, were spelt *émé*, according to the French, or *ama*, according to the English power of those letters, would the word be changed? Or if the English word *cough* were spelt *cof*, would that change the word? And how much more reasonable is it to reform the orthography of an illiterate people among whom the use of letters was so rare that no particular mode of spelling had yet been settled, no uniform power given to their letters, every one being left free to express the words of the language by such combinations of letters as seemed to him to come near their sound. How little they were agreed as to the powers of their own letters, and how differently and awkwardly they combined them to produce the same sound, needs no better example than that furnished by Dr. Hickes of the short and simple sound of *many* being endeavored to be represented by twenty different combinations of letters; to wit, in English characters, *mænigeo*, *mænio*, *mæniu*, *menio*, *meniu*, *mænigo*, *mænego*, *manige*, *menigo*, *manegeio*, *mænegeo*, *menegeio*, *mænygeo*, *menigeio*, *manegu*, *mænigu*, *menegu*, *menego*, *menigu*, *manigo*. Now, would it change the word to banish all these, and give it, in their books, the orthography of *many*, in which they have all ended? And their correction in type is no more than every reader is obliged to make in his mind as he reads along; for it is impracticable for our organs to pronounce all the letters which their bungling spellers have huddled together. No one would attempt to give to each of these twenty methods of spelling *many* the distinct and different sounds which their different combinations of letters would call for. This would be to make twenty words where there surely was but one. He would probably reduce them all, wherever he met with them, to the single and simple sound of *many*, which all of them aimed to produce. This, then, is what I would wish to have done to the reader's hand, in order to facilitate and encourage his undertaking. For remove the obstacles of uncouth spelling and unfamiliar character, and there would be little more difficulty in understanding an Anglo-Saxon writer than Burns' Poems. So as to the form of the characters of their alphabet. That may be changed

without affecting the language. It is not very long since the forms of the English and French characters were changed from the black letter to the Roman; yet the languages were not affected. Nor are they by the difference between the printed and written characters now in use. The following note, written by Ælfric, is not the less Latin because expressed in Anglo-Saxon characters:

‘Ego Ælfricū ꝥꝥipꝥi hunc Libꝥum in monaꝥteꝥio Baꝥdonio et de di Bꝥihteꝥolde ꝥꝥeꝥoꝥito.’

We may say truly, then, that the Anglo-Saxon language would still be the same, were it written in the characters now used in English, and its orthography conformed to that of the English; and certainly the acquisition of it to the English student would be greatly facilitated by such an operation.

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A SPECIMEN

OF THE

FORM IN WHICH THE ANGLO-SAXON WRITINGS STILL EXTANT MIGHT BE
ADVANTAGEOUSLY PUBLISHED, FOR FACILITATING TO THE ENGLISH
STUDENT THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE ANGLO-SAXON DIALECT.

GENESIS.—CHAPTER I.

1. On angin y-shope God hevenan and earthan.

In beginning shaped God heaven and earth.

2. Se earth sothelic was idle and empty, and thestre weron over there newelness broadness ; and God's
The earth forsooth was idle and empty, and darkness were over the abyss's broadness ; and God's

gost was 'y-fared over water.

ghost was fared over water.

3. God cwoth tha, y-werth liht, and liht werth y-wrought.

God quoth then were light, and light were wrought.

4. God y-saw tha that it good was, and he to-dealed that liht from tham thestrum.

God saw then that it good was, and he dealed that light from the darkness.

5. And het that liht day, and the thestre night. Tha was y-worden even and morowen an day.

And hight that light day, and the darkness night. Then was wrought even and morn ane day.

6. God cwoth tha aft, y-werth nu fastness to-mids them waterum, & to-²tweme the water from them

God quoth them afer, were now fastness amidst the waters, & twain the waters from the

waterum.

waters.

7. And God y-wroht the fastness, and to-twemed the water the weron under there fastness from them

And God wrought the fastness, and twained the waters that were under the fastness from them

the weron boven there fastness ; it was tha swa y-done.

that were aboven there fastness ; it was then so done.

8. And God het the fastness heavenan, and was tha y-wroden even & morowen other day.

And God hight the fastness heaven, and was then wrought even & morn other day.

GENESIS.—CHAPTER I.

1. On anginne gesceop God heofenan and eorþan

2. Seo eorþe soþlice wæs ydel & æmtig, and
thoestru wæron ofer thære niwelnisse bradnisse &
Godes gast was geferod ofer wæteru.

3. God cwæth tha, ge-weorþe leoht; & leoht wearþ
ge-worht.

4. God geseah tha thæt hit god was, and he to
dælde that leoht fram tham theostrum.

5. And het that leoht dæg, and tha theostra
niht. Tha wæs ge-worden æfen & morgen an dæg.

6. God cwæth tha eft, gewurþe nu fæstnis tomid-
des tham waterum, and totwæme tha wæteru fram
tham wæterum.

7. And God geworhte tha fæstnisse, & totwæmde
tha wæteru the wæron under thære fæstnisse fram
tham the wæron bufan thære fæstnisse; hit wæs tha
swa gedon.

8. And God het tha fæstnisse heofenan, and wæs
tha geworden æfen & morgen other dæg.

¹ The prefixes *ge*, *ye*, *y*, *i*, being equivalent, I
shall use the *y* for them all.

² *Twam* signifies twain.

9. God tha soothlic cwoth been y-gathered tha water the sind under there heavenan, and atewy dry-
God then forsooth quoth, be gathered the waters that are under the heavens, and shew dry-
 ness; it was tha swa y-done.
ness; it was then so done.

10. And God y-kyed the dryness earthan, and the water y-gathering he het seas: God y-saw tha that
And God called the dryness earth, and the water gathering he hight seas: God saw then that
 it good was.
it good was.

11. And cwoth, sprute se earth growend gras & seed workend, and apple bear tree wæstm workend
And quoth, sprout the earth growing grass & seed working, and apple bear tree fruit working
 after his kin, these seed sy on him selfum over earthen; it was tha swa y-done.
after his kin, the seed be in him self over earth; it was then so done.

12. And se earthl fortha-teah growend wort & seed bearing by hire kin; & tree westm workend, and
And the earth forth-brought growing wort & seed bearing by their kin; & tree fruit working, and
 y-whilc seed havend after his hue. God y-saw tha that it good was;
ilc seed having after its hue. God saw then that it good was;

13. And was y-wroden even and morwen the third day.
And was wrought even and morn the third day.

14. God cwath tha sothlic, be nu liht on there heavenan fastness, and to-dealon day and niht, and
God quoth then forsooth, be now light in the heaven fastness, and deal day and night, and
 been to-toknum & to-tidum, & to-dayum & to-yearum.
be tokens & tides, & days & years.

15. And hi shinon on there heavenon fastness, and a-lihton tha earthan; it was tha swa y-wroden.
And they shine in the heaven fastness, and a-lighten the earth; it was then so wrought.

16. And God y-wroht twa mickle liht, that mair liht to these days lihting, & that less liht to the
And God wrought twa mickle lights, the more light to the days lighting, & the less light to the
 niht lihting; and starran he y-wroht.
night lighting; and stars he wrought.

17. And y-set hi on there heavenon that hi shinon over earthan,
And set them in the heavens that they shine over earth,

9. God tha sothlice cwæth, beon gegaderode tha wæteru the sind under theare heofenan, and æteowigedrignis; hit wæs tha swa gedon.

10. And God gecigde tha drignisse eorþan and thæra wætera gegaderunga he het sæs. God geseah tha that hit god wæs.

11. And cwæth, spritte seo eorthe growende gær and sæd wircende, and æppelbære treow, wæstm wircende æfter his cinne; thæs sæd sig on him silfum ofer eorþan. Hit wæs tha swa ge-don.

12. And seo eorthe forþa-teah growende wirte and sæd berende be hire cinne, and treow westm wircende & gehwile sæd hæbbende æfter his hiwe. God geseah tha that hit god was.

13. And wæs gewroden æfen & morgen the thridda dæg.

14. God cwæth tha sothlice, beo nu leoht on thære heofenan fæstnisse, and to ælon dæg & nihte, & beon to tacnum & to tidum & to dagum & to gearum.

15. And hig scinon on thære heofenan fæstnisse and alihton tha eorþan. Hit wæs tha swa geworden.

16. And God geworhte twa micle leoht, that mare leoht to thæs dæges lightinge, and that læsse leoht to thære nihte lihtinge; & steorran he geworhte.

17. And gesette hig on thære heofenan, that hig scinon over eorþan.

³ *Teon producere, forþa-teon, forth-bring.* See post v. 20, *teon, forth*; also 11, 9, *forþa-teah*.

⁴ *Fastness, firmament.*

18. And gimdon these days and these niht, and to-dealdon liht and thester. God y-saw tha that it
And govern the days and the nights, and deal light and darkness. God saw then that it
 good was.
good was.

19. And was y-wroden even and morwen, the fourth day.
And was wrought even and morn, the fourth day.

20. God cwoth eke swile, teon nu that water forth swimmend kin cuic in life, & flying kin over earthan
God quoth "eke swile, bring now the water forth swimming kind quick in life, & flying kind over earth
 under there heavenan fastness.
under the heaven fastness.

21. And God y-shope tha the mickelan whales, and all livend fishen, and stirrendlia the tha water tugon
And God "shope then the mickle whales, and all living fishes, and stirring that the water "tows
 forth on heor hiwum, and all flyend kin after heor kin ; God y-saw tha that it good was ;
forth in their "hue, and all flying kind after their kind ; God saw then that it good was ;

22. And bletsed hi thus quothend, waxath and beeth y-manifold, & y-fillath the sea-water and tha
And blessed them thus quothing, wax and be manifold, & fill the sea-water and the
 fuweles been y-manifold over earthan.
fowles be manifold over earth.

23. And tha was y-wroughten even and morwen tha fifth day.
And then was wrought even and morn the fifth day.

24. God cwoth eke-swile, lead se earth forth cuic niten on heor kin, & creepend kin and deer after
God quoth eke-swile, lead the earth forth quick "neats in heor kin, & creeping kind and "deer after
 heor hiwum. It was tha swa y-wroden.
their hue. It was then so wrought.

25. And God y-wroht there earthen deer after hir hiwum, and tha neaton, and all creepend kin on
And God wrought the earthen deer after their hue, and the neats, and all creeping kind in
 hior kin. God y-saw tha that it good was.
their kind. God saw then that it good was.

26. And cwoth, "Uton, workan man to and-likeness, and to our y-likeness, and he sy over the fishes,
And quoth, Come, work man to likeness, and to our likeness, and he be over the fishes,

18. And gimdon thæs dæges there nihte, & to dældon leoht and theostra. God geseah tha that hit god wæs.

19. And wæs geworden æfen & morgen se feortha dæg.

20. God cwæth eac swilce, teon nu tha wæteru forth swimmede cynn cuic on life, & fleogende cinn ofer eorþan under there heofenan fæstnisse.

21. And God gesceope tha tha micelanh walas, & eall libbende fiscinn & stirigendlice, the tha wæteru tugon forth on heora hiwum, and eall fleogende cinn æfter heora cinne. God geseah tha that hit god wæs.

22. And bletsode hig thus cwethende, weaxath & beoth gemenigfilde, & gefillath there sæ wæteru, and tha fugelas beon gemenigfilde ofer eorþan.

23. And tha wæs geworden æfen and morgen se fifta dæg.

24. God cwæth eacswilc, læde seo eorthe forth cuic nitena on heora cinne, and creopende cinn, and deor æfter heora hiwum. Hit wæs tha swa geworden.

25. And God geworhte there eorþan deor æfter hira hiwum, & tha nitenu and eall creopende cynn on heora cynne. God geseah tha that hit good wæs.

26. And cwæth, Uton, wircean man to andlicnisse, and to ure gelicnisse, and he sig ofer tha fixas,

⁵ *Eac-swilc*, also.

^{5b} *Shope* (Bailey), for shaped.

⁶ *Verstegan*—*tuge*, to draw out—to lead; toga ductor (Bens.).

⁷ *Huwe*, color (Versteg—Benson); it means also a hive, house, family.

⁸ *Nitena*, neat cattle.

⁹ *Deer*. Probably this was then the generic name for all the feræ, or wild quadrupeds.

¹⁰ *Uton*, verbum hortantis, ace (Benson); come.

and over the fowles, and over the deer, and over all y-shaft, & over all the crepend the stirreth on
and over the fowls, and over the deer, and over all creatures, & over all the creeping that stirreth on
 earthan.
earth.

27. God y-shope the man to his and-likeness, to Godes and-likeness he y-shope hine wer-hoods and
God shope then man to his likeness, to God's likeness he shope him, man-hoods and
 wife-hoods he y-shope hy.
wife-hoods he shope them.

28. And God hy bletsed and cwoth, waxeth and beeth y-manifold, and y-filleth the earthan, and
And God them blessed and quoth, wax and be manifold, and fill the earth, and
 y-wieldeth hy, and haveth on yourum y-wield there sea-fishes and there lyft-fowels and all neaten that
wield them, and have in your wield the sea-fishes and the air-fowls and all neats that
 stirreth over earthan.
stirreth over earth.

29. God cwoth tha, "even, I for-give you all grass and wort-seed bearend over earthan, and al
God quoth then, even, I give you all grass and wort-seed bearing over earth, and all
 treewa tha the haveth seed on him selfon heor owens kins, that hy been you to meat.
trees that haveth seed in himself, their own kinds, that they be you to meat.

30. And allum neatum and all fowelkin and eallum tham the stirreth on earthan, on tham the is
And all neats and all fowl-kind, and all them that stirreth on earth, on them that is
 livend life, and hi havon hem to yreordien. It was tha swa y-done.
living life, and they have them to feed. It was then so done.

31. And God y-saw all the thing the he y-wroht, & he weron good. Was tha y-wroughten even
And God saw all the things that he wrought, & they were good. Was then wrought even
 and morwen se sixth day.
and morn the sixth day.

& ofer tha fugelas, and ofer the deor, and ofer ealle gesceafta, and ofer ealle tha creopende se stirrath on eorþan.

27. God gesceop tha man to his andlicnisse, to Godes andlicnisse he gesceop hine, werhades and wifhades he gesceop hig.

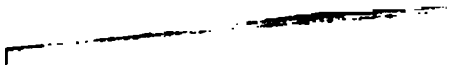
28. And God hig bletsode and cwæth, wexath and beoth gemenigfilde, and gefillath tha eorþan and gewildath hig, and habbath on eowrum gewearde thære sæ fixas and thære lyfte fugelas & ealle nytenu the stiriath ofer eorþan.

29. God cwæth tha, Efne, Ic for-geaf eow eall gærs and wyrta sæd berende ofer eorþan, and ealle treowa tha the habbath sæd on him silfon heora agenes cynnes, that hig beon eow to mete.

¹¹ *Efne*, verily, *adv.* (Bailey); lo!

30. And eallum nytenum & eallum fugelcynne and eallum tham the stiriath on eorþan, on tham the ys libbende lif, that hig habbon him to gereordienne. It was tha swa gedon.

31. And God y-saw ealle tha thing the he geworhte, and hig wæron swithe gode. Was tha geworden æfen and mergen se sixth dæg.



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